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ABSTRACT

A study determined how exposure to learning writing as process through writing workshops would affect the attitudes of fifth grade students. Subjects had no experience with writing as process. At the outset of the school year, the participants, 23 fifth-grade students in a northeastern New Jersey school, were administered the "Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students" as a pre-survey to determine their preferences, perceptions, and processes of writing. Seven months later, after learning writing as process, a post-survey was given. Results indicated that exposure to learning to write as process increased students' enjoyment of writing, enthusiasm for writing, as well as their willingness to write more often. Students also expanded their awareness of the process stages of writing, and they now view themselves as writers. Recommendations for teachers, researchers, and administrators are offered, including reading about writing as process, sharing research results with students, and attending appropriate workshops and conferences. (Contains 23 references and 2 tables of data. The survey instrument is attached.) (RS)

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ED 379 668

A Process of Metamorphosis:

Changing Children's Attitudes Toward Writing

Linda A. Thomas

William Paterson College

May, 1992

CIRL 627 Research in Reading

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine how exposure to learning writing as process through writing workshop would affect the attitudes of fifth grade students. Previous to this study the students had no experience with writing as process. At the outset of the school year, the participants, 23 fifth grade students, were administered the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students as a pre-survey to determine their preferences, perceptions, and processes of writing. Seven month later, after learning writing as process, a post-survey was given. Results indicated that exposure to learning to write as process increased students enjoyment of writing, enthusiasms for writing, as well as their willingness to write more often. Students also expanded their awareness of the process stages of writing. They now view themselves as authors. Recommendations for teachers, researchers, and administrators are offered.

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CHAPTER 1

The Problem

James Britton states, "All of life is a prewriting activity." (Mayher, Lester, Pradl, 1983, p. 5). If this is so fifth grade students are well prepared to write. On the average, they have had ten years of preparation. Ten years of experiences to write about, but do they know this? Do they know that writing needs to come from within and not from an outside source? Do they know what to do with all of their experiences, thoughts, ideas, and imaginations?

Process writing gives students the opportunity to write from within. Unlike the more traditional approaches to writing whereby students are told what, how, and how much to write, the writing process methodology gives students the opportunities to write about what they know and for a meaningful purpose, thus developing that all important writer's voice (Graves, 1983). The focus of the writing process, as suggested by its name, is the process by which writers write. Advocates of process writing look at how students write, what they do, say, write, and express as they move from conceiving an idea to the final product; and in many cases, never reaching a final product.

Researchers, such as Atwell, Britton, Calkins, Emig, Graves, and others, in this field have found that children exposed to the writing process see themselves as members of

what Graves calls "the literacy club." They are excited about writing, they write more often, and their process of writing changes.

Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of process writing on students' attitudes towards writing. Prior to this study, the students involved had no contact with writing as process in school.

The question that this study sought to answer is:

Will exposure to learning to write through a process approach affect writing attitudes of fifth-grade girls and boys as measured by the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students?

Specifically:

Will students' preferences for writing change?

Will students' perceptions of writing change?

Will students' processes of writing change?

Will students' sex be a factor in determining their attitudes?

Definitions

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined as follows:

Audience: Those for whom a writer writes.

Paradigm: A group of ideas, methods, and sources of evidence (Emig, 1983). A mind-set or philosophy.

Sustained writing: Straight, uninterrupted time for writing in an unbroken fashion (Graves, 1991).

Voice: The imprint of the writers on what they write, how they choose and organize their information, what they say, and how they say it (Graves, 1983).

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. The sample of students is limited to an intact group of one fifth grade class in a middle-class community located in northwestern New Jersey. The class includes 14 girls and 14 boys for a total of 28 students. Hence the sample is small in size and is not a random sample. Generalizability is limited to similar populations.

Determination cannot be made as to whether the students were answering the survey questions to meet teacher expectation or whether they were expressing their own real feelings.

The survey questions were read aloud by the tester to avoid any misinterpretations by the students due to reading difficulties. However, determination cannot be made as to whether students fully understood or interpreted all questions in a like manner.

Students' previous writing experiences included workbook pages, dittos, answering questions from textbooks, summarizing books for reports, and assigned reports about famous people. Their pre-existing concepts of writing may be the teacher-directed report writing. This type of assignment as

compared to workbooks and dittos may be rated favorably by the students. Thus their pre-existing concepts of writing, book summaries and reports, may have been compared to workbook and ditto writing.

Significance of the Study

Because the writing process methodology advocates meaningful writing for a purpose, students involved in this process see themselves as authors. Their work is published and shared with an audience. The importance and usefulness of writing is reinforced across the curriculum. Because their writing comes from within, students develop their own voices in their writing. Students are the experts about their writing because they write from their own experiences, thoughts, and imaginations. Exposure to writing as process changes the way children write and view writing forever. Twenty-eight children's schemata have been altered to know writing as it is meant to be because of this exposure. Hopefully, they have had paradigm shifts from the traditional orientation of writing to the process orientation.

Results from this study will be shared with the administrator of the school and the reading/language arts specialist. The effects of process writing on promoting positive children's attitudes toward writing will be recognized in a study which directly involved students within the district. This study will be yet another piece of evidence for the need to adopt the writing process as a district-wide method

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in the teaching and promotion of writing among students.

In addition, the results of this study will add to the literature involving the effects of process writing on children's preferences, perceptions, and processes of writing.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

The review of the literature in this chapter will focus on research in writing, the writing process, the writing workshop, and students' attitudes toward writing as well as the effects of process writing on students' attitudes.

Writing Research

Research into the writing process began on a large scale in the 1970s (Britton, 1970). This approach process was brought to elementary school students in the 1980s (Wepner, Feeley, Strickland (Eds.) (1989). A combination of influences from cognitive and physiological psychology, anthropology, linguistics, computer science, social psychology, learning theory and educational practices impacted on writing research (Kamil, Langer, Shanahan, 1985).

Three major models affected writing research:

1. Bottom up. This model asserts that the writing process begins with the organization of words, sentences, and the grouping of sentences. This model is a skills oriented approach.

2. Top down. This model asserts that writing is meaning centered. The writers focus on what they have said, are saying, and will say. The top down theory centers on the holistic nature of writing.

3. Interactive model. This model can be described as a process which is recursive. The steps or stages in composing,

pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing (Graves, 1983) do not follow in a linear fashion (Kamil, et al., 1985).

"Research indicates that the only way one learns to write is by writing" (Mayher, Lester, Pradl, 1983, p.1). Using language; speaking, listening, and particularly reading, contributes to growth of writing ability (Smith, 1982).

The Writing Process

The process of writing involves not merely, "transcribing a predetermined text" (Mayher, et al., 1983, p. 78) but integrating pre-existing knowledge with new information to communicate something new. When this is accomplished, writers learn not only about writing but also about themselves (Mayer, et al., 1983).

Writing is a developmental linguistic process. It is a part of our language system as is speaking, listening, and reading. The speech of young children develops in an environment which focuses on making meaning (Smith, 1985). In order for writing to develop it must be meaningful. Writers must write for a purpose and an audience, even if the audience is themselves (Atwell, 1987; Britton, 1970; Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983). Writers must be encouraged to develop their own voices in their writing rather than to follow a rigid outline (Graves, 1983). This is not to say that writing instruction is not given or that anything and everything that students put down on paper is acceptable for publication. It is to say,

however, that for many who have been reared in producing only grammatically perfect pieces of writing, a paradigm shift must occur. A shift from focusing on process instead of product (Calkins, 1986; Emig, 1983). Teachers must watch their students write, hear their ideas, discuss strategies, and talk to their students about writing (Calkins, 1986).

Theorists in the writing field talk about the various stages of the writing process in different terms. Whether they call these stages percolating, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing as Mayher, Lester, and Pradl (1983) do, or rehearsal, drafting, revision, and editing as Calkins (1986) does, the writing process looks at all phases of composing thus is able to help children understand writing as a process and not just the churning out of perfect final copies.

It would be a mistake not to include reading when discussing writing. Reading not only makes students better readers but better writers as well (Calkins, 1986). Dorothy Strickland states that the association between oral language, reading, and writing is made early in life (Feeley, Strickland, Wepner (Eds.) (1991). Through reading, students sample a variety of writing styles and vicarious experiences. Through their association with authors, students see that books are written by real people. When students publish their own work, they become real authors; thus when they read another author's work, they look at it through the eyes of a writer as well as a reader (Smith, 1982). They begin to hone their writing taking

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from authors and feeling a kinship with authors, thus they can more easily relate to text.

In her book, The Art of Teaching Writing, Calkins tells about a four-stage writing process using the terms rehearsal, drafting, revision, and editing.

Rehearsal is thinking about a piece of writing, getting ideas, formulating something inside - a potential story.

Drafting is putting something down on paper. That something is as unique as the writer. It may be a list of ideas, an introductory sentence, a concluding sentence, or the middle. Essentially drafting is taking a chance with ideas. Calkins feels this is probably the most vulnerable time because the writer's ideas are exposed for the first time.

Revision refers to rereading and changing what was drafted to clarify meaning and to develop the piece of writing.

Editing is the process whereby the writer steps back and rereads the piece as if they were someone else. It must make sense and have the writer's voice. If the writer is satisfied, it is ready for final copy.

Researchers Hayes and Flowers assert that these subprocesses are recursive, that is editing may occur during drafting, and rehearsal may occur during editing (Kamil, Langer, Shanahan, 1985). There are no steadfast rules thus writers are in charge of their composing.

The Writing Workshop

Process writing takes place in what is commonly known as a writing workshop. There are no blueprints on how to organize a classroom conducive to the writing process, however, there are some common threads that run through a successful writing program.

Donald Murray (1968) states that the climate of the writing workshop must be one in which the students are active learners. Where the responsibility for learning is handed over to them.

Nancie Atwell (1987) stresses the importance of organization to avoid wasted time for the students as well as teacher. Writing and publishing materials need to be kept on hand in a specific place where they are available as the students need them. Writing folders need to be kept in a box and returned after use. Regular blocks of time need to be set aside for sustained periods of writing (Graves, 1991). This allows students to anticipate and plan for writing (Atwell, 1987).

Teachers must write with students to serve as a role model as well as to show students the importance that writing carries. Teachers need to compose on the board or on an overhead projector and think out loud as they write so that children can understand that composing does not happen by magic (Atwell, 1987; Emig, 1983; Graves, 1983). Students need to see that writing doesn't need to be in one's head before it goes down on paper. It is often as Britton says "shaping at the

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point of utterance" (Mayher, Lester, Pradl, 1983, p.5).

Mini-lessons are an important component of the writing workshop. Calkins (1986) refers to the mini-lesson as quick tips that begin the writing workshop. She warns that teachers should avoid the question/answer method that seems to be prevalent in schools. Often conventions of writing are addressed in mini-lessons (Graves, 1991). Graves suggests using trade books to point out the use of conventions by professional writers. Since much emphasis is place on student input, a student may direct the lesson or may assist a fellow student individually. Mini-lessons may address the whole class, a small group that may need help with a specfic skill, or an individual student.

Conferencing, which refers to dialogue about writing, may take the form of peer conferencing or teacher-student conferencing. It can occur at any stage of the composing process. It may be specifically about a piece of writing or about writing in general. The purposes of conferencing are multi-faceted. Briefly, conferencing keeps the teacher informed of the students' progress and allows the students to listen to themselves. Graves (1991) states that it gives the children the opportunity to hear their voices control their writing. Conferencing also allows the teacher to take advantage of what Vygotsky calls the "zone of proximal development." That is, a teachable moment when the right question or statement from the teacher, or sometimes from the

student, allows for something new to be learned whether it be a skill, writing technique, or new information or point of view. Atwell (1987), Graves (1991), and Murray (1968) state that conferencing improves the quality of children's writing. The goal of conferencing is to help students become better problem solvers. Graves (1983) states that for ownership to occur, students must be in charge of their writing. Students must be given the freedom to take risks and not remain on safe-ground so that growth and self-confidence occur.

Writing workshop should end with a sharing session so that writers share not only what they've written but also how they've written. This allows for students to show-off their authorship (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983, 1991; Murray, 1968; Smith, 1982). Providing students with an audience for their writing gives it worth and purpose.

Children's Attitudes Toward Writing

Students who enter school want to write and feel they are able to write. Eighty-five percent of all kindergarteners think they can write (Graves, 1991). Research shows, however, that this enthusiasm is short lived.

In 1984, National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reported that there was a deterioration of stuents' positive attitudes toward writing across the grades (Applebee and others, 1986). According to this study, students in fourth grade reported that they like to write 57 percent of the time. This percentage decreased to 39 percent by eleventh grade. The

assessment reported that overall students in grades four, eight, and eleven were not enthusiastic about writing, although the students did indicate that they felt writing is an important skill. In this study, students reported a decrease in functional writing (lists and instructions) between grades four and eight as well as a decrease in writing for pleasure (stories and poems) (Applebee and other, 1986).

A three-year longitudinal study was conducted in Tennessee by Kathy Krendl and and Julie Dodd (1987) to evaluate their new writing curriculum which was modeled after the National Writing Project. Their sample consisted of 90 students in grades three through twelve. In the second and third year of the study, students showed an increase in their interests in learning to write, in their levels of confidence, and in their association between their self-esteem with good writing as measured by teacher evaluation of their writing and annual questionnaires. Their attitudes improved towards completing assignments. In addition, they felt their writing abilities improved, and they felt writing was less difficult.

In another study conducted by Freeman and Sanders (1987) of 60 students in grades kindergarten, two, and four who write using process writing, it was found that children place value on wriitng and that writers need a sense of audience. The children in this study say that writing was meant to be read. Similar results were found in a study involving 30 fifth grade students. Over a 36 week program using the writing process, 80

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percent of the students showed a marked improvement in their confidence and enjoyment of writing after process writing methodology was implemented (Hernandez, 1987).

In an attempt to improve writing in low-achieving secondary school students, Susan Dickinson (1990) used the workshop approach with 50 high school students in two low-level English classes. Dickinson found that students' attitudes improved and the number of distruptions decreased. Students who had a choice in the subject matter, which is characteristic of the writing process, are less likely to be bored, are more motivated to write, and write more, and the quality of their writing improved (Glasser, 1990).

Another study using fifth grade students as a sample showed an improvement in the writing abilities and writing attitudes of fifth grade Florida student. Students were introduced to process writing and cooperative learning groups. During the 1989-90 school year, 30 of the fourth graders were surveyed pre-process writing and cooperative learning. They were asked about their feelings toward writing. Of the 30 statements, 28 were negative, only two of the 30 statements were positive. After exposure to the writing process, writing quality improved. Voluntary journal writing increased by 59 percent to 685 percent, quantity of voluntary finished work increased 33 percent to 300 percent, and students' feelings towards writing showed a 25 percent to 80 percent improvement towards the end of the program (Donato, 1990).

A seven month study of 15 second graders and 17 fourth graders was conducted by Barbara Jones and Gerarda Wahlers in a northern New Jersey community in an effort to determine parents' and students' attitudes toward writing. Pre- and post-writing process program attitude surveys showed that second graders exhibited an increase in their willingness to revise, select topics, and write. The fourth graders were reported to revise more and showed more interest in writing.

In a paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Reading Conference in 1989, Robert Nistler reported on his study involving 36 students in the first, third, and fifth grades from two middle-class Texas schools. When asked about their concepts of authorship, students' attitudes were that "true" authors wrote lengthy pieces and had their works published. While some children in the first and third grades considered themselves authors, no fifth graders considered themselves to be authors because they had not published a book. When asked about their sense of audience, first grades indicated that the purpose of audience was to check for errors. Fifth graders seemed to have a better sense of audience and even indicated places in their text where they consciously wrote for the reader.

Children need to be motivated (Glasser, 1990). They need to write for an audience. They need to feel that their work has purpose, and that the time they invest is for a worthwhile goal. They need teachers who will let them write, and who will

let them think about their writing. Teachers who understand the writing process and who understand what it can do toward molding children's attitudes and values toward writing. Children need teachers who will allow them to make their mark on the world and who will provide them with the tool to do it. Clearly, writing as process is this tool.

CHAPTER 3

Methods and Procedure

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of a process writing approach on students' attitudes toward writing. The fifth grade students were introduced to process writing in a writing workshop classroom setting. They wrote on a daily basis from self-selected topics and genres. Throughout the year, a variety of teacher-selected topics and genres, expanded upon by the students, were assigned in conjunction with literature studies.

Students' attitudes were assessed through the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students in September 1991 and again in April 1992. This was done in an effort to determine students' attitudes toward their perceptions of writing, preferences for writing, and their processes of writing.

Setting and Sample

This study took place in an elementary school located in the northeastern part of New Jersey in an urban/suburban community. Contained in its 12.2 square miles are 12 shopping areas, several major industries, 28 parks, seven large townhouse complexes, as well as modest and affluent neighborhoods. The median price of a one-family house is $175,000 with a property tax of $2,500. There are no slum areas.

This community's population is approximately 80,000. The racial ethnic breakdown is as follows:

ETHNIC GROUP	POPULATION	PERCENTAGE
White	71,742	87%
Hispanic	4,877	7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2,513	4%
Black	1,005	2%

The district's 16 schools service 7,656 students in grades kindergarten through twelve. The thirteen elementary schools include grades kindergarten through five. There are two middle schools which include grades six, seven, and eight. The high school contains grades nine through twelve. The budgeted expenditure is $6,914 per pupil per annum.

Sample

The student sample involved in this study was one heterogeneously grouped fifth grade class of 28 students. Of the 28 students, there were 14 females and 14 males.

The students are grouped heterogeneously for homeroom, math, English, social studies, science, physical education, health, music, and art. The reading groups are homogeneously grouped. The current fifth grade is divided into two reading groups. One group is reading in a fifth grade reading level basal, and the other is reading in a sixth grade reading level basal. Because of students moving in and out of the class, complete data were collected from only 23 students, 12 females, and 11 males.

Instruments

The instrument used in this experimental study was the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students (1979). This scale is divided into three clusters: preference for writing, perception of writing, and process of writing.

The pre- and post-scores in the preference for writing cluster will indicate if the subjects' overall preferences for writing has increased or decreased. The perception of writing cluster includes questions which indicate the subjects' perceptions of themselves as writers as well as their perceptions of others as writers. The process of writing cluster addresses such items as revision practices and topic choice, in other words, students' awareness of the process itself.

The scoring of the items in this survey are in the form of a Likert five-point scale: Almost always (5), often (4), sometimes (3), seldom (2), almost never (1). Five is the most desirable score while one the least. Questions 11, 14, 20, 28, 35, 36, 37, and 38 were reverse scored.

The validity, reliability, and normative data of the Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students is described as follows:

The original scale was used in a 1977-1978 study of the New Jersey Writing Project. Twenty-five teachers and sixteen hundred students participated in this study. The present scale was constructed after suggested revisions were made by English

education graduate students and secondary teachers of English. The suggestions of these experts contributed to the content validity of the scale. Cronbach alpha reliabilities for the subscales are as follows: Perception, .589; Process, .726; and Preference, .716 (Emig, King, 1979).

Procedure

The time period involved in this study was from September, 1991, to April, 1992. The survey was administered to the students on September 6, 1991, as a pre-survey to determine students' attitudes toward writing before being exposed to process writing and the writing workshop. Each of the 40 items was read orally by the teacher. Students were instructed to read along, respond after each item, and not to move ahead.

During the course of the year, students were introduced to process writing. Initially topics were brainstormed, and students were instructed to write silently for a period of ten minutes. After silent-writing time, students shared their writing with their partner or small group. Volunteers then shared their writing with the entire class. As a culminating activity to this type of writing activity, the class discussed writing in general.

It is important to note that at all times during silent writing, the teacher wrote as well. This served to show the students that writing does not stop when adulthood is reached and that writing is important since the teacher engages in the activity. Not only did the teacher serve as a role model by

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writing but also by discussing the process of writing.

After approximately a month of this structured procedure, the writing workshop took on a less structured format. Students began their own pieces of writing, moved among conference partners depending upon who was the expert on a particular topic, revised, edited, and published their own work at their individual paces. Mini-conferences were held between teacher and students. This type of informal process writing and publishing continued throughout the year inside and outside of the classroom. Often students wrote and published at home, bringing in their pieces to share. Many wrote stories which they developed further with sequels, while others wrote books containing chapter after chapter of text.

Notebooks for journal use were distributed on the first day of school. Daily entries were made for the first month of school. After that, important events were entered into the journals although many students made daily entries. Some students used their journals as dialogue between the teacher and themselves.

In addition, these journals were used as literary response logs for books read by the entire class. Multiple copies of the trade books, The Black Stallion, What's the Big Idea, Ben Franklin?, The Whipping Boy, and Caddie Woodlawn, were read by all and responded to in writing.

Writing on a more formal basis consisted of writing in a variety of genres after literature studies. A variety of books

on fairy tales, poetry, tall tales, historical fiction, biographies, and Caldecott award books were made available to the students. After reading and discussing the components of these literary works, students wrote and published their own versions. Students' original fairy tales and picture books were read by the "authors" to the primary-grade students.

Writing was further used to enhance learning in content area subjects. Research and non-fiction writing were addressed through the use of thematic units. A study of the United States was culminated with presentations by each student at a state fair. States were researched and reports and projects presented orally and displayed to the entire student body. A Presidents' Day Celebration was conducted in a similar fashion.

In an effort to teach letter writing in meaningful context, students exchanged several letters with a fifth grade class in Minnesota and wrote to their favorite authors as well. In addition, students sent letters to presidential candidates expressing their personal political views.

News reporting was addressed in the form of a classroom newspaper, Colonial Times, which was written and "put to press" using the computer program The Children's Writing and Publishing Company. Students transformed themselves into colonial reporters or famous patriots and reported on events leading to the Revoluntionary War, the war itself, and its conclusion with the signing of the Treaty of Paris.

Journals were used across the curriculum to integrate

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writing into all subject areas. Students created original inventions which were presented during parent visitation. Journal entries were made to record the inception of their ideas, the planning of the inventions, descriptions of the inventions, and finally students' reactions to their oral presentations.

Since there is only one classroom computer, it was used on a rotating basis by the students. The programs used most frequently by the students were The Children's Writing and Publishing Company, The Print Shop, and Bank Street Writer.

Within the genre studies and the non-fiction writing, students chose their topics, drafted, revised, edited, and planned their presentations. This is consistent with a process writing approach, with writers being in charge of their writing.

In an effort to evaluate changes in students' attitudes toward writing, the Emig-king Writing Attitude Scale for Studentswas re-administered on April 16, 1992. Again the questions were read aloud by the teacher while the students read along, then responded to questions designed to measure their preferences for writing, perceptions of writing, and processes of writing.

Treatment of Data

Pre- and post-test scores on the Emig-King clusters were subjected to t-tests for correlated means. The significance level was set at the .05 level. Scores for boys and girls were calculated separately to see if sex might be a factor.

Summary

A process writing approach, delivered through writing workshop, was introduced to students in the fifth grade as a means of developing their understanding of the writing process, apporeciation and enthusiasm for writing, and an awareness of using the various stages of the process. Classroom discussions were based on students' and teacher's experiences and strategies used while writing. Results will be reported in Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of learning writing as process through writing workshop on the attitudes toward writing of fifth grade girls and boys. Specific areas of writing assessed were preference for writing, perception of writing, and process of writing. Students' attitudes were surveyed in September and again in April.

Scores for girls and boys on the pre- and post-surveys were treated separately to determine if sex would be a factor in determining attitudes. These results are reported in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1

Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students

Means and t-scores (Girls)

N= 12

	Pre-Program		Post-Program			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-score	Sign.
Preference	31.67	(5.91)	37.5	(6.20)	3.17	$p<.01$
Perception	50.67	(5.23)	53.75	(4.92)	1.22	NS
Process	28.75	(3.70)	31.58	(2.4)	3.14	$p<.05$

Table 2

Emig-King Writing Attitude Scale for Students

Means and t-scores (Boys)

N= 11

	Pre-Program		Post-Program			
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-score	Sign.
Preference	28.82	(6.85)	37.73	(7.09)	4.46	$p<.01$
Perception	46	(2.95)	49.73	(4.55)	1.94	NS
Process	29.64	(5.48)	28.18	(2.98)	-.38	NS

Results and Discussion

Preference for writing

As indicated by Tables 1 and 2, both girls and boys showed a significant difference at the .01 level in their preferences for writing. The girls' means went from 31.67 to 37.5. The boys' means on the pre- and post-surveys were 28.82 and 37.73 respectively.

During the course of the year, it was evident through teacher observation that both girls and boys were enthusiastic about writing. Students wrote in a variety of forms such as journal writing, story writing, and genre writing in connection with literature. Differences between the writing of girls and boys was noted. Boys, for the most part, wrote about adventures, often including violence. Girls, on the other hand, tended to write more poetry, holiday stories, and stories about everyday activities. Both groups included themselves and their friends as story characters.

Journals were introduced to the students at the beginning of the year. Specific time was set aside for journal writing. The students, however, had the option to write in their journals whenever they wanted. As the year progressed so did students' involvement in journal writing. The girls, in particular, wrote and submitted their journals for teacher response. This supports the findings of a study performed in Florida (Donato, 1990) whereby voluntary journal writing and students' feelings toward writing improved when a process

writing approach was implemented.

Girls were also observed to use writing in planning and organizing their activities. For example, female students made lists for a school patrol trip to Washington D.C. Included were plans for sharing a room, food and clothing to bring, and sites they wished to see.

In order to teach letter writing in meaningful context (Atwell, 1987; Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983; Murray, 1968; Smith, 1982), each student had a penpal from a fifth grade class in Minnesota. While on a field trip, several girls bought post cards to send to their penpals. This showed a need to share and express their experiences through writing. In two separate instances, boys suggested two other activities in the form of letter writing. This willingness to write as a result of teaching writing through process was shown in similar studies by Dickinson (1990), Donato (1990), Hernandez (1987), and Jones and Wahlers (1990).

The increase in positive attitudes toward writing was further indicated by the majority of students who chose writing over other activities during "free time." In addition, many students voluntarily composed at home and brought their work into class to share.

Daily use was made of the writing workshop materials and supplies. These were readily available to students as suggested by researcher Atwell (1987). This alleviated wasting time looking for or waiting for materials, and it also allowed

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students to work at their own pace.

These behaviors exhibited by the students clearly indicate that their preferences for writing are strong. Often the teacher would hear, "Please, please can we write?" or ""Can we have more time to write?" This researcher believes that this positive attitude change, as shown by the survey results and by observation, as well, is attributed to the writing as process approach used to teach writing throughout the year.

Perception of writing

Although mean scores for both boys and girls show gains in this area, the change was not significant. The girls' mean on the pre-survey, as indicated by Table 1, was 50.67, and their post-survey mean was 53.75, while the boys' pre- and post-survey means were 46 and 49.73 respectively.

This researcher feels that although neither group showed any significant differences, important changes were indicated on individual questions. For example, when asked if they felt workbook exercises and studying grammar helps them with their writing, the students' responses on the pre-survey were closer to almost always (1) while on the post-survey, their responses were closer to almost never (5), the more desirable response. This is in agreement with a body of general research which states that skills taught out of context are not transferred when students compose. Apparently, these students got the message!

Almost all of the students indicated that they must learn

to write a good paragraph before they can write an entire theme. This was the least desirable answer. It is difficult to determine why they responded in this manner. An explanation might be that the students assumed that because paragraphs comprise completed themes, they must be able to write paragraphs correctly in order to write a complete theme.

This researcher feels the most important changes in attitude involving perceptions of writing was that the students now understand that writing doesn't happen by magic, but that all writers need to go through a process. Unfortunately, this type of question was not included in the perception cluster.

Process of writing

Process of writing scores changed significantly at the .05 level for the girls as indicated in Table 1. While the girls' mean in the pre-survey was 28.75, on the post-survey it was 31.58. On the other hand, the boys' scores showed no significant differences. The boys pre-survey mean was 29.64 while their post-survey mean was 28.18 as shown in Table 2. In this cluster, with this particular fifth grade class, there appears to be a gender difference in their attitudes toward the process of writing.

According to their responses, the girls indicated that they voluntarily re-read and revised what they wrote. This result is supported by the Jones and Wahlers study (1990) whereby fourth graders were more willing to revise at the end of the study. A majority of the boys indicated that they

seldom re-read and revised. Teacher observation of this group confirmed that the girls were indeed more willing to revise their work. The boys were eager to share their work with their friends and with the entire class, however, they seemed to be happy with what they put down at the drafting stages and were not interested in revising. It should be noted that the boys seemed to orally rehearse and conference moreso than the girls. The boys discussed a lot of their ideas aloud and made changes orally before committing their ideas to text. Researcher Frank Smith (1982) states that using language such as speaking and listening contributes to the growth of writing ability. The girls spent less time rehearsing and more time drafting. Researchers Laosa, and Johnson and Greenbaum (cited Harris & Sipay, 1985) found that girls are more apt to fit into the "appropriate" student role that emphasizes obedience and conformity while boys tend to be more active participants. Girls may see writing as more appropriate behavior while rehearsing ideas out loud may be considered more active participation.

Boys and girls alike indicated the more desirable response in the post-survey about sharing their work with family, friends, and classmates. The sense of being able to share their work is very important to a writer's purpose (Atwell, 1987; Britton, 1970; Calkins, 1986; Graves, 1983).

In answer to the question, "I do school writing assignments as fast as I can," the boys responded closer to

almost always (1), rather than the more desirable almost never (5). It is possible that the boys were responding with the idea of drafting in mind. While drafting, they tended to write very quickly paying little attention to neatness and mechanics and more to getting their thoughts on paper. This is the main goal of the drafting stage in process writing (Calkins, 1987).

Neither group seemed to want to finalize their writing. Both girls and boys hung on to their stories by writing additional chapters or sequels.
This clearly shows a feeling for and ownership toward their writing.

The girls were definitely more willing to edit their work and see it in final copy. The boys, on the other hand, were satisfied to leave much of their work in the revision state as long as they felt their voices were heard and their meaning was clear. This also was observed to be the case when publishing the picture books which were written and illustrated by each student. The boys quickly edited their text and drew their illustrations. As a group, they were the first completed. Conversely, the girls languished in this project, slowly writing their final copy of the text and carefully perfecting their illustrations. For this age group, ages ten to twelve, the girls tend to be more mature and more self-disciplined. Because of this, they are probably better able to handle and appreciate the detailed work of publishing than are the boys who seem to want to complete a task and move on.

The writing workshop provided the kind of climate conducive to the growth of writing, sharing, and meeting the individual needs of the students. Having supplies and materials available for the students when they needed them avoided wasting time and kept the motivation level high. This is advocated by Nancie Atwell (1987). When the students were ready to publish, they did so at their individual pace. By being allowed the freedom to make their own decisions, they developed a variety of publishing techniques.

The result of teacher observation is concurrent with the results of the attitude survey. The girls more readily went through the stages of process writing while the boys were reluctant to edit. The boys, however, exhibited a growing awareness of these stages.

Conclusion

After observing the students over period of seven months, it is this researcher's conclusion that experiencing writing as process has turned this group of students into authors. It was exciting to hear, during conferencing with these students, that they were in charge of their writing. At the beginning of the year, the students would ask questions such as, "What should I write about?" and "How long does it have to be?" By the middle of the seven month period, their questions changed. Students began asking questions to see if their ideas expressed in writing were clear to the reader. They were now aware of audience. They were writing for a purpose. As a result of

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experiencing writing as process, these fifth grade students are now members of the literacy club (Smith, 1985). As the year progressed, the students were more enthusiastic about writing. As a group their preferences for writing increased significantly as indicated by their post-survey results, by their requests to spend time writing, and by choosing writing activities during "free time." They now know that writing doesn't happen by magic. They are now more aware of the process that writers go through: a process that requires thought, planning, revision, and editing. It is a process that sometimes entails periods of confusion and frustration, but a process whose end results gives the writers a sense of pride in what they've accomplished.

CHAPTER 5

Summary

In an effort to develop more positive attitudes toward writing and to develop writing abilities, fifth grade students were introduced to learning writing as process through writing workshop.

During the year, students wrote everyday using the various stages of process writing. Students' work was published so that students saw themselves as authors, so that they had a purpose to write, and so that they would enjoy writing and develop their writing skills.

A writing attitude survey was administered in September, 1991, to determine students' preferences, perceptions, and processes of writing. The same survey was again administered in April, 1992, to determine if there were any changes in attitudes. Girls' and boys' surveys were scored separately to determine if sex was a factor.

Conclusions

The results of the surveys showed that both girls and boys showed a stronger preference for writing as a result of process writing strategies. Motivation is a key element in accomplishment. Since students prefer to write as a result of process writing, if given the opportunity, they will write more often and, through this practice, develop their writing

abilities.

Although neither group showed a significant attitude change in the perceptions of writing, both groups' post-test scores were higher. An analysis of individual items confirmed that both were moving in the desired direction and were gaining more realistic perceptions about writing.

The girls' attitudes toward the process of writing changed significantly during the year. The girls indicated that they more readily re-read and revised their writing. They also indicated a stronger sense of audience. The boys, on the other hand, showed a less positive attitude toward the process of writing on the post-survey. This researcher, however, has observed an improvement in all stages of the students' writing processes as the year progressed.

The results of this study indicate that experiencing writing as process has had an overall positive effect on the attitudes of the fifth grade students involved. These students are now composing as "real" writers do. They have developed voices in their writing, and they are using their background knowledge of the writing process to draw upon when composing. They are perceived as developing a strong sense of ownership toward their writing.

Recommendations

To Teachers

From the positive attitude changes which occurred from the introduction and implementation of writing as process in this

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and other studies, it is important to realize that teaching writing as process is an invaluable approach which needs to be used to encourage students to become writiers. Students learn by being active participants rather than by passively absorbing information. Writing as process forces students to become active participants in their learning. They are required to take charge of their writing by selecting their own topics to write about, by deciding how their topics will be developed and what the finished product will be. A focus on process writing provides for the natural development of written language. It focuses attention on the process of learning and not the finished product. It assumes all children can write and that they have something worth saying. It allows for the growth of writing abilities because process writing strategies take place in a non-threatening climate where students are not afraid to take risks. "Mistakes" are looked upon as springboards for growth. It is within this environment that students develop their own styles and choices in their writing rather than all marching to the same beat, drumming out the same type of stories.

For those unfamiliar with writing as process, it would be advisable to read books by experts in the field; such as Donald Graves (1983), Lucy Calkins (1986), and Nancie Atwell (1987). Their books contain practical ideas on how to implement the writing workshop in the classroom. Teachers should talk to other teachers who use the process approach, attend workshops

and courses to keep abreast, or to become familiar with what's happening in the field of writing and reading, as well.

During writing workshop, teachers need to write with their students so that students have a model to emulate. In addition, by actively going through the process, teachers will better understand what their students experience when writing. They will have a stronger base for discussions concerning what writers do and how they feel when writing. These types of discussion are as important to the development of the students' writing abilities as are the mini-lessons on writing skills.

To Researchers

If this survey is used to determine students' attitudes, this researcher would suggest reading it aloud to the students. It would also be important to discuss the areas of response from almost always(5) to almost never(1) with the students to alleviate any misunderstanding. In the process of writing cluster, the questions concentrate on revising, audience, and topic selection. Questions that address rehearsal, conferencing, and drafting techniques might be included to give even more insight into the students' writing processes. Results from this writing attitude survey can be shared with associates and administrators in order to promote or substantiate the value of writing as process.

To Administrators

Because of the powerful role that administrators play in both the school and district, it is important that they keep

abreast of current research and strategies in education. They need to review the literature, attend conferences and workshops, and have a working rapport with their teachers, parents, and other administrators so that ideas can be exchanged and developed.

Research in process writing and students' attitudes attest to its value in the teaching of writing. Because of this, it would be advantageous to implement the process approach within the school and district. Administrators can begin with teachers who are interested in or who are using writing as process to spearhead the movement. They can schedule staff development for faculty to learn about the process approach, allow teachers time to exchange notes on what they are doing to promote process learning, and encourage teachers to attend courses and workshops on current trends in writing and reading.

They can institute a school-wide literary program and have such programs as book reading contests or marathons. With the assistance of the media specialist, they can have students submit their published writing to the library to be made a part of the library's book collection. With the asssistance of parents who are willing to devote time, administrators can establish a school newspaper to which aspiring authors can submit their work.

Administrators can serve as a model by reading to and writing with students. They can talk to students about their literary activities.

Once this type of program is established in their school, administrators can push for it to be adopted by the rest of the district using their school as a model. Once this program is in place, administrators need to keep it alive and fresh by encouraging staff and students and by providing the materials necessary to nuture it.

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EMIG-KING WRITING ATTITUDE SCALE FOR STUDENTS

CLUSTERS

1 Preference for Writing: 1,2,4,13,16,17,18, 19,22,25,29,34,39,40

2 Perception of Writing: 8,9,10,11,12,15,21, 23,24,26,28,31,32, 35,36,38

3 Process of Writing: 3,5,7,14,20,27,30, 33,37

Not Categorized: 6

For Teachers

CLUSTERS

Preference for Writing: 2,4,5,6,12,15,17,19 24, 25, 28,29,31, 35,36 40,43,45,49

Perception of Writing: 1, 3,7,8,9,10,13,16 18,20,21,22,23,26,27, 30,32,33,34,37,38,39, 41,44,46,47,48,50

Process of Writing: 11,14,42

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Appendix 47.

Sex: M___ or F___

EMIG - KING ATTITUDE SCALE FOR STUDENTS

For each item, circle your response.

1.	I write letters to my family and friends.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
2.	On my own I write stories, plays or poems.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
3.	I voluntarily re-read and revise what I've written.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
4.	When I have free time, I prefer writing to being with friends.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
5.	I prefer topics I choose myself to ones the teacher gives.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
6.	On the whole I like school.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
7.	I use writing to help me study and learn new subjects.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
8.	Girls enjoy writing more than boys do.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never

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Appendix 48.

9.	I like what I write.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
10.	Writing is a very important way for me to express my feelings.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
11.	Doing workbook exercises helps me improve my writing.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
12.	A student who writes well gets better grades in many subjects than someone who doesn't.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
13.	When I have free time, I prefer writing to reading.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
14.	I do school writing assignments as fast as I can.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Always never
15.	I get better grades on topics I choose myself than on those the teachers assign.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Always never
16.	I write for the school newspaper, literary magazine, or yearbook.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never

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Appendix 49.

17.	I voluntarily keep notes for school courses.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
18.	When I have free time, I prefer writing to sports, games or hobbies.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
19.	I leave notes for my family and friends.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
20.	The teacher is the most important audience for what I write in school.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
21.	Students need to plan in writing for school themes.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
22.	When I have free time, I prefer writing to watching television.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
23.	I write better than I speak.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
24.	Good writers spend more time revising than poor writers.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
25.	I accept positions in groups that involve writing.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never

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Appendix 50.

26.	I write better than I read.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
27.	I spend more time on a piece of writing I do outside school than one I do as an assignment.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
28.	Studying grammar helps me improve my writing.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
29.	I'd rather write than study literature.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
30.	I share what I write for school with family and friends.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
31.	I write public figures like my congressman or mayor.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
32.	I write graffiti.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
33.	In class, I share what I write with other members of the class.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
34.	When I have free time, I prefer writing to listening to music.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never

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Appendix 51.

35.	Teachers give poor grades to papers that have misspellings.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
36.	Writing for others is more important than expressing myself.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
37.	I can put off doing assigned writing until the last minute and still get a good grade.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
38.	I must learn to write a good paragraph before I can write an entire theme.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
39.	I keep a journal or diary.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
40.	I prefer writing to dramatics in English class.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
41.	I prefer word-processing to hand writing.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never
42.	I need to write a draft by hand before working on the word processor.	Almost always Often Sometimes Seldom Almost never

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